



## UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 6

1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200  
Dallas, Texas 75202 - 2733

March 15, 2019

Mr. Craig West  
Sr. Manager, EHS, Phosphate LA Operations Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC  
7250 Highway 44  
Uncle Sam, Louisiana 70792

Re: Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC - Uncle Sam Facility: Notice Pursuant to Attachment E of Appendix 1 to Consent Decree in the Matter of United States et al., v. Mosaic Fertilizer, LLC, Civil Action No. 2:15-cv-04889-CJB-KWR

Dear Mr. West:

I am writing in connection with Mosaic's statement, in its March 13, 2019 Daily Report on the status of Stack 4 at the Uncle Sam Facility, that it intends to stop decanting water from Stack 4 once achieving the 180-ft water elevation level. EPA and LDEQ understand that the 180 foot level may be achieved today. Mosaic's stated reason for suspending removal of water from the stack at this level is the stability evaluation presented in the 3-1-19 Ardaman letter shared with EPA and LDEQ, and its belief, based on that evaluation, that a breach at or below the 180-foot elevation will not result in a release of process water outside the stack. EPA and LDEQ remain concerned with the stability of the stack, for the following reasons:

- Although stack movement has slowed over the past few weeks, it still continues at a rate such that movement expected in one year (1/2") is observed in just 2 or 3 days. Extrapolation from the current data suggests that movement may not stop for another 100 days.
- The Ardaman stability model that Mosaic relies on suggests the safety factor is 1.10 at the 180 foot level. However, because the movement continues at the rate noted above, even as the level approaches 180 feet, it is our view that the stack remains in a slow failure mode, implying a safety factor below unity.
- Lowering the water in the stack below 180 feet will lower both the load and the phreatic surface in the gypsum, both of which will enhance stability.
- Because the stability model does not appear to be correctly predicting stack stability, and we still have not physically identified the location where the failure surface encounters the surface, there remains the possibility that the failure surface starting point is farther south than predicted.

For these reasons, EPA, with the concurrence of LDEQ, is asking that Mosaic continue to decant water from Stack 4 until the elevation is below 179 feet. We will evaluate the data again when the elevation reaches that level or below.

Should you have any questions in this matter, please contact Joel Dougherty at [REDACTED] or at [dougherty.joel@epa.gov](mailto:dougherty.joel@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Cheryl T. Seager  
Director  
Compliance Assurance and Enforcement  
Division

Ecc: Lourdes Iturralde, [lourdes.itturalde@la.gov](mailto:lourdes.itturalde@la.gov)